COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is intended for students who plan to work in schools or in agencies that are school-based or school-linked. While it is primarily a practice course, it is also a policy course because social work practice in schools is so strongly influenced by state and Federal education laws. It elaborates and builds upon basic skills and knowledge learned in 1st semester policy and foundation courses, to help the student take his or her first steps toward expertise in this specialization.

This course seeks to familiarize students with the roles social workers assume in schools; the culture of primary, middle, and high schools; the psychosocial and developmental needs of the students; and the pressing issues facing schools today, including violence, diversity, racism, homophobia, over-crowding, poverty, and the changing relationship between family, school and community.

See Appendix A for information on Plagiarism, HIPAA alert, using E-RES, etc.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course, students will be able to
1. Understand the role and duties of a school social worker;
2. Understand the problems and strengths of American schools;
3. Understand how to navigate and deal with systemic collaboration and conflict in the complex environment of the school;
4. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to recognize and assess the most common psychosocial problems of students in schools today, including those involving learning disabilities, developmental delays, and mental illness;
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the most effective interventions, and have the skills to treat or refer children who suffer from the problems uncovered in Objective 4;
6. Understand the problems faced by vulnerable populations including poor, minority, gay, ESL, and handicapped children in school settings;
7. Demonstrate knowledge of what policies and interventions will most benefit those children described in 6;
8. Evidence the knowledge and skills to evaluate the success of school-based interventions using appropriate research techniques;
9. Evidence the knowledge and skills to educate teachers, individually or in a group as might be assembled during professional improvement days, about the psychosocial problems of children and adolescents.
10. Evidence an understanding of the ethics of working in a school setting, and understand how the ideologies of educators can differ from those of social workers.

COMPETENCIES (See appendix B)

2.1.6 ENGAGE IN RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE AND PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH (Assign II)

2.1.7 APPLY KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT (Assign I & II)

2.1.8 ENGAGE IN POLICY PRACTICE TO ADVANCE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING AND TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES (Assign II)

2.1.9 RESPOND TO CONTEXTS THAT SHAPE PRACTICE (Assign II)

2.1.10 ENGAGE, ASSESS, INTERVENE, AND EVALUATE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES (Assign I & III)

Required Texts


Recommended Texts


("*" denotes a classic text.)

COURSE REQUIREMNETS

Students are expected to arrive at class on time; to have completed and be prepared to discuss the readings; to complete the assignments in a timely manner; and to treat each other with respect.
Students with more than two unexcused absences from class will fail the course, as is consistent with school policy.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Assignment 1 – Uncovering needs. Due week six.**

**Part 1 (1 page)**
Describe the school you have chosen to visit. What kind of community is it located in? Is it public, private, parochial? Does it seem to have a philosophy or mission statement? What age group does it serve? How large is it? How is it funded (provide percentages)? How much do they spend per pupil? How do all these factors combine to affect the services it provides?

**Part 2 (3 or 4 pages)**
Interview the following people at the same school: the school social worker (or school psychologist or counselor), an administrator (the principle, if possible, or a house-master), a teacher, 3 students, and 3 parents (if possible.) Give a flavor of the interviews. Try to uncover at least three school “needs” that might be appropriate for social work intervention. Be as specific as possible when you describe them.

Use open-ended questions framed around the issues discussed in class. Here are some examples of questions you might use. Students are encouraged to make up their own questions. Are there issues with...

- Increasing rate of poverty and single parent households?
- Over-crowding and increased enrollment?
- School violence and acting out behavior?
- Multicultural needs of students and a shortage of culturally competent staff?
- Centralized school authority and community needs?
- Balancing demands of special education and regular education?
- Developing linkages between schools and community based services?

Try to think systemically. Look for needs that involve the relationship of the school to the students and to the community. Is this problem well known to everyone, or are certain groups unaware of it or in denial? Has the school tried to deal with it in the past? How, why, and to what extent have past attempts been successful or unsuccessful (learn from the experience of others)?

Include citations from class readings and the NASW School Social Work guidelines as appropriate.

Learning Objectives 2, 4, 6

**Assignment II – The Literature Review; Program & Evaluation (due week 12)**

(4 pages)
Choose one issue identified in assignment one and find four or more recent articles from professional journals that describe similar issues and how schools and other organizations have dealt with them. Review these articles, sifting out and synthesizing relevant information. Were the programs described really successful? Which of them might you use as the basis for the program you plan to design? Why?
Learning Objectives 2, 4, 6

Create a program to address the need you identified in assignment one. Would you work on the individual level, the group level, the level of the school community, the national level? Would you attempt to create new policy? Would you provide special training for students, or staff? Educational materials, or a media campaign? If so, how would you finance it? Please be as specific as you can.

Using techniques read about and discussed in class, plan an evaluation of your program. How will you know it works?

- Is it a process or an outcomes evaluation?
- Is it quantitative or qualitative?
- What is your evaluation hypothesis?

Will you use focus groups? Questionnaires? Sociometric techniques such as sociograms? Can you evaluate cost-benefit or cost effectiveness?

Please prepare a PowerPoint presentation or slides of your findings, including graphs, tables, or sociograms as appropriate, to liven up your presentation. Include citations from the class reading and the NASW social work guidelines as appropriate.

Students will present their research during the final 2 or 3 sessions of the course. No written paper is required but please create a brief handout containing the vital information from your presentation to share with classmates.

Learning Objectives 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

**Instructional Methods and Grading Policy**

Classes will be taught using a combination of lecture, discussion, role-plays, and media presentations.

The two written assignments will account for 70% of the student’s grade, and the presentation, for the remaining 20%. The remaining 10% will be based on the students’ intellectual investment in the course.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Sessions One: the Public School System in Society**

The session will investigate the public school system in society, its function and significance as a universal entitlement, how students and their families are viewed, how it is similar and different from other institutions, and how present day schools differ from those of the past. Students’ own
school experiences will be elicited as basis for discussion in this session, and throughout the course. (course objective 2.)

**Required Reading:**
Chapter 1: Major Issues in American Schools (pp 1-22) in:
Social Work Services in Schools


**Session Two: Social Work Practice in Schools**

The session will examine the history of school social work and the tasks that school social workers perform, including the problems of collaborating with teachers and administrators who hold different professional beliefs. The values and ethics of school social work, as proposed by the National Association of Social Work, will also be discussed (learning objectives 1, 3).

**Required Reading:**

**Session Three: A Psychosocial Framework for Practice in Elementary Schools**

Sessions 3, 4, and 5 deal with issues relevant to elementary school. Most elementary schools accept children from 6 to 12 years of age, a period known as latency. The developmental tasks of this age group will be reviewed, as well as their moral development as described by Kohlberg. Play therapy techniques for this age group will be explored with special emphasis on vulnerable populations including socially and economically disadvantaged children, and those who have been exposed to loss and trauma (learning objectives 4, 5, 6, 7).

Sections of the videotape, *Techniques of Play Therapy: a Clinical Demonstration*, will be shown.

**Required reading:**

**Suggested:**

**Session Four: Head start and early intervention**

Head start, a program aimed at socially and economically disadvantaged children, remains the subject of controversy. Big gains in cognitive skills were seen over a short term, but the once the child left the program, the gains were reported lost. Or were they? Is there such a thing as a “sleeper effect” in education and human intelligence? Can an intervention performed in early childhood have an effect years later? Early intervention has attracted attention in recent years as a treatment for autism (See Dawson, et al.). Issues of social justice, social action, and diversity will be discussed. (learning objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7.)

**Required reading:**


**Session Five: Special Education**

Two court decisions in 1970 to 1972 created special education. These and subsequent legislation dramatically altered the nature of services offered to children in schools. Topics will include the Vocational Rehabilitation act of 1973, the Education of all handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (PL 105-17), Independent Educational Plans (IEP), Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individual Transition Plan (ITP). Issues of social action and social justice will be discussed (course objectives one, two, four, five, six and seven.)

**Required Reading:**


**Session Six: ADHD**

Since the 1930s, vast numbers of children (mainly boys) have been diagnosed as ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). Treatment usually involves a psychostimulant such as Ritalin or Dexedrine. Are children being helped, or simply addicted to speed? Topics will include the social construction of ADHD, diagnostic criteria according to the DSM IV-R and use of the Connor’s questionnaire as a diagnostic instrument(learning objectives 4, 5, 6, 7).

**Required reading:**

children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). *Focus on Exceptional Children, 33* (5), 1-23.

Connor’s Questionnaires and scoring materials (class handout).

**Suggested:**
Section on ADHD (pp. 85-93) in...


**Session Seven: A Psychosocial Framework for Practice in Middle School and High Schools**
Adolescence is a period of major change and transition. The developmental tasks of early and middle adolescence will be reviewed, as well as programs and services appropriate for the age group (learning objectives 4, 5, 6, 7)

Appropriate play therapy modalities including the use of board games and card games, and age-appropriate murals in art therapy (course objectives four, five, six and seven) will be examined.

**Required Reading:**


**Suggested:**


**Session Eight: Bullying & Aggression**
In 1999, two students at Columbine High walked into school one day armed with automatic weapons and homemade bombs and murdered 15 of their classmates. Could this tragic loss of life have been prevented? Can school violence be reduced in a society suffused with violence? (learning objectives 4, 5, 6, 7).

**Required reading:**

Chapter 3, Case 8, Evan Ramsey (the School System from Hell). in...

**Suggested Reading:**


**Peer Mediation:**

**Session Nine: Truancy & school attendance**
In some urban areas, as much as thirty percent of the students may be absent on a daily basis. According to the Department of Justice, truancy is a major problem in our schools, and a stepping stone to career criminality. Truancy is particularly a problem for vulnerable populations including the poor, recent immigrants, impulsive and acting out students, and those who feel alienated and disenfranchised. The reasons for truancy will be explored as well as programs and interventions for this problem (learning objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7.)

**Required Reading:**
Chapter 5, School Attendance (pp. 115-123) in:
Allen-Meares et al.

**Suggested:**


Section on separation anxiety disorder, pp. 110-113).


**Session Ten: School-based and school-linked services**

Adolescents are the most medically and psychologically under-treated segment of the population. School-based health centers have been heralded as the solution to adolescent health risks, and vilified as a covert movement to promote birth control and abortion. Attempts to turn SBHCs into a safety net for the vast numbers of children left uninsured by the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 will also be examined. Issues of social justice and social action will be discussed (learning objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 7)

**Required reading:**


**Suggested:**


Session Eleven: Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable populations, including the poor, the homeless, gay students, minority students, and those who have suffered extreme abuse and neglect often find themselves at a distinct disadvantage when dealing with social and academic challenges. A major part of school social work involves identifying these students and providing them with support and referral services. Social justice, social action, and diversity will be discussed (learning objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 7.)

Required reading:
Chapter 9: Some target groups of children (pp. 191-221) In:
Social Work Services in Schools

Read at least three articles from the following groups:

**Articles on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth:**


**Articles on students with disabilities:**


**Articles on minority and ESL students:**


Session Twelve, Thirteen and Fourteen: Oral Presentations

School social workers play an important role in educating teachers and administrators about social problems, and empirically proven interventions. Most schools have “professional improvement days” where social workers are given the opportunity to present formal training sessions. Such presentations contribute to the influence and status of the individual within the system, promote interdisciplinary collaboration, as well as the status of the profession. In sessions 12, 13, and 14, students will make a presentation of their semester project. This exercise provides an opportunity for students to practice presenting as well as sharing their research with their colleagues. (Learning objectives 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)

Required Reading:
Please complete any reading that remains incomplete from prior sessions, and begin to read “suggested” works.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Brown, B., & Merritt, R. (2002). *No easy answers; The truth behind the death at Columbine.* New York City: Lantern Books


Appendix “A”

PLAGIARISM
Students should remember that the School will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically FAIL the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

HIPAA ALERT
In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work, will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, rkohn1@yu.edu, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, akelsen@yu.edu, during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

E-RES (Electronic Reserve)
Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve [E-RES]. You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

How do I Use E-RES?
1. Go to the library's online resources page: http://www.yu.edu/libraries/online_resources.asp
2. Click on E-RES. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access Service login and password.
3. Click on "Search E-RES" or on "Course Index," and search by instructor's name, department, course name, course number, document title, or document author.
4. Click on the link to your course.
5. Enter the password 6630SPR.
6. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.
7. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.
## Appendix “B” Core Competencies

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>MEASURE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1</td>
<td><strong>IDENTIFY AS A PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORKER AND CONDUCT ONESELF ACCORDINGLY</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Advocate for client access to the services of a social worker</td>
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<td>Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development</td>
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<td>Attend to professional roles and boundaries</td>
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<td>Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication</td>
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<td>Engage in career-long learning</td>
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<td>Use supervision and consultation</td>
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<td>2.1.2</td>
<td><strong>APPLY SOCIAL WORK ETHICAL PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE</strong></td>
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<td>Recognize and manage personal values in a way that allows professional values to guide practice</td>
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<td>Make ethical decisions by applying standards of the NASW Code of Ethics</td>
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<td>Tolerate ambiguity in resolving ethical conflicts</td>
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<td>Apply strategies of ethical reasoning to arrive at principled decisions</td>
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<td>2.1.3</td>
<td><strong>APPLY CRITICAL THINKING TO INFORM AND COMMUNICATE PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENTS</strong></td>
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<td>Distinguish, appraise, and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, including research-based knowledge and practice wisdom</td>
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<td>Analyze models of assessment, prevention, intervention and evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and colleagues</td>
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<td>2.1.4</td>
<td><strong>ENGAGE DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE IN PRACTICE</strong></td>
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<td>Recognize the extent to which a culture’s structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power</td>
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<td>Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups</td>
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<td>Recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping life experiences</td>
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<td>View themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants</td>
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<td>2.1.5</td>
<td><strong>ADVANCE HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination</td>
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<td>Advocate for human rights and social and economic justice</td>
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<td>Engage in practices that advance social and economic justice</td>
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<td>2.1.6</td>
<td><strong>ENGAGE IN RESEARCH-INFORMED PRACTICE AND PRACTICE-INFORMED RESEARCH</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use practice experience to inform scientific inquiry</td>
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<td>Use research evidence to inform practice Assign II</td>
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<td>2.1.7</td>
<td><strong>APPLY KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR AND THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
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<td>Utilize conceptual frameworks to guide the processes of assessment, intervention, and evaluation Assign I</td>
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<td>Critique and apply knowledge to understand person and environment Assign II</td>
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<td>2.1.8</td>
<td><strong>ENGAGE IN POLICY PRACTICE TO ADVANCE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING AND TO DELIVER EFFECTIVE SOCIAL WORK SERVICES</strong></td>
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<td>Analyze, formulate, and advocate for policies that advance social well-being Assign II</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collaborate with colleagues and clients for effective policy action</td>
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<td>2.1.9</td>
<td>RESPOND TO CONTEXTS THAT SHAPE PRACTICE</td>
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<td>Continuously discover, appraise, and attend to changing locales, populations, scientific and technological development, and emerging societal trends to provide relevant services</td>
<td>Assign II</td>
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<td>Provide leadership in promoting sustainable changes in service delivery and practice to improve the quality of social services</td>
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<tr>
<th>2.1.10</th>
<th>ENGAGE, ASSESS, INTERVENE, AND EVALUATE WITH INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, GROUPS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.10(a)</td>
<td>Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substantively and affectively prepare for action with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use empathy and other interpersonal skills</td>
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<td>Develop a mutually agreed-on focus of work and desired outcomes</td>
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<td>2.1.10(b)</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
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<td>Collect, organize and interpret client data</td>
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<td>Assess client strengths and limitations</td>
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<td>Develop mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives</td>
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<td>Select appropriate intervention strategies</td>
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<td>2.1.10(c)</td>
<td>Intervention</td>
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<td>Initiate actions to achieve organizational goals</td>
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<td>Implement prevention interventions that enhance client capacities</td>
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<td>Help clients resolve problems</td>
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<td>Negotiate, mediate, and advocate for clients</td>
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<td>Facilitate transitions and endings</td>
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<td>2.1.10(d)</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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<td>Analyze, monitor and evaluate interventions</td>
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